

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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received SEP 6 1984

date entered

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

173-5880-0016

1. Name

historic Lassen Hotel

and/or common Market Centre

2. Location

street & number S.W. Corner, Market Ave. and First Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Wichita

N/A vicinity of

state Kansas

code 20

county Sedgwick

code 173

3. Classification

Category

☐ district
☒ building(s)
☐ structure
☐ site
☐ object

Ownership

☐ public
☒ private
☐ both
Public Acquisition
☐ in process
☐ being considered

N/A

Status

☐ occupied
☐ unoccupied
☒ work in progress
Accessible
☒ yes: restricted
☐ yes: unrestricted
☐ no

Present Use

☐ agriculture
☒ commercial
☐ educational
☐ entertainment
☐ government
☐ industrial
☐ military

☐ museum
☐ park
☐ private residence
☐ religious
☐ scientific
☐ transportation
☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Investment Resources Corporation

street & number 434 N. Market, Suite 200

city, town Wichita

N/A vicinity of

state Kansas 67202

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Sedgwick County Courthouse

street & number Main and Central

city, town Wichita

state Kansas

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title NONE

has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date N/A

☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A

state

7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved

date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Lassen Hotel is an eleven-story building occupying the southwest corner of Market and First Streets in the commercial center of Wichita. Built in 1918 with an L-shaped plan above the first two floors, it was enlarged in 1922 by the addition of a matching wing on the southwest, giving the upper portion of the building a U-shaped plan. Structurally, it is carried by a modular frame, nine bays in width, east-west, and seven bays in depth, north-south. There are entrances in the center bay of the east facade and the fourth bay from the corner on the north facade. The exterior is faced in red brick trimmed with terra cotta.

Stylistically, the Lassen is a combination of the Commercial Style and the Second Renaissance Revival. The two primary facades exhibit the classical tripartite division typical of large commercial buildings of its period. The "base" originally consisted of a row of fluted Corinthian pilasters of terra cotta, two stories in height, spaced according to the structural bays. These pilasters carried a full entablature, which in turn "carried" the ornamented windows of the third story. In 1958 the pilasters and entablatures were covered by a uniform, flat surface of granite panels. These are to be removed in the present rehabilitation, but the pilasters and entablatures were badly scarred and may need to be completely replaced. All of the Corinthian capitals were lost when the panels were applied.

On the ground floor the space between the pilasters was originally filled by plate glass windows set in metal frames, with transoms above. A strip of patterned tile and brick work divided the first and second stories. On the second story, the space between the pilasters was occupied by plain double-hung windows flanked by brick infill. These areas were also thoroughly altered in the 1958 remodeling.

The first floor windows are surrounded by decorative frames of terra cotta, which remain unchanged. The fourth through ninth stories form the central "shaft" element of the design. In this portion the window openings pierce unadorned brick walls.

The tenth floor constitutes the crowning element of the design. Here a complex pattern of arches, stringcourses, swags, and cartouches surrounds the windows. Above them is a wide modillion cornice, which carries a balustraded parapet. The eleventh story is not expressed on the primary facades, being concealed behind the cornice and parapet.

The windows on the primary facade, on the second through tenth stories, were originally double-hung with wooden sashes. A single eight-over-eight occupied each end bay and paired six-over-six windows occupied the others. On the secondary facades most of the windows were six-over-six. In recent years all of the windows on the principal facades have been replaced with one-over-one windows in aluminum frames, although many original windows remain on the rear walls.

The interior of the hotel has undergone major renovation work on several occasions, most extensively in 1957, leaving relatively little interior fabric intact. Of the original interior features which do remain, the most notable are the marble floor of the lobby and the decorative plasterwork in the ceilings of the second floor corridor, which was formerly a mezzanine overlooking the lobby.

A two-story annex on the south side of the Lassen building is not included in this nomination.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1918 **Builder/Architect** Richards, McCarty, & Bulford Architects

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Lassen Hotel is significant both for its historical associations with the development of the city during the important period of growth between World War I and the Great Depression, and for its importance as a major example of the commercial architecture of the city during that period. It thus meets criteria B and C.

The Lassen Hotel was built in 1918 and began operation on January 1, 1919. It was named for Henry Lassen, a prominent Wichita flour miller and investor in the hotel. The Lassen was the first high-rise hotel in Wichita and at the time of its construction was the tallest building in the city. At that time it was the largest hotel in Kansas. It was built at a cost of about one million dollars.

Throughout most of its history as a hotel, the Lassen was the premier hotel and convention center for the city, as well as a major meeting place and a center for Wichita's social life. Numerous notable figures in the fields of music, sports, theater, politics, and aviation stayed there, including William Jennings Bryan, Vice President Charles Curtis, John Phillip Sousa, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Knute Rockne, Jack Dempsey, Will Rogers, Rudolph Valentino, Al Jolson, Col. and Mrs. Charles A. Lindbergh, Amelia Earhart, and Rear Admiral Richard E. Byrd.

In the 1930s the Lassen owned and operated Wichita's oldest radio station which used the call letters KFH, for "Kansas Finest Hotel."

The Lassen Hotel is one of the largest and oldest of the classically-inspired commercial buildings of the post-World War I boom period in Wichita. Other prominent buildings of this period which still remain are the Broadview Hotel, built in 1921, and the Orpheum Theater Building, built in 1922.

From its opening in 1919 to 1933, the Lassen was operated by the Rigby-Gray Hotel Company.

In 1933, the hotel was purchased by the Seymour Hotel Company who owned it until 1935. From 1935 to 1942 it was owned by the Lassen Hotel Company, and by Schimmel Hotels, Inc., from 1942 to 1968. In 1968, it was purchased by the Premium Service Corporation and operated as the Radisson Hotel until 1971. In 1971 it was purchased by Defenders of the Christian Faith who operated a retirement home there until 1981.

After standing vacant for several years, the hotel is now being rehabilitated for use as a commercial office building.

THIS STATEMENT REFLECTS CURRENT KNOWLEDGE AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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Continuation sheet 1

Item number 9

Page 1

Peerless Princess of the Plains: Postcard Views of Early Wichita. Two Rivers Publishing Co.,
Wichita, Kansas 1976.

Wichita Daily Eagle, January 1, 1919.

Wichita Evening Eagle, April 30, 1933.

Wichita Morning Eagle, November 13, 1962.

Original architectural drawings, 1917.

This nomination was prepared from a draft submitted by Paula Stoner Reed of Preservation Associates, Inc., 207 S. Potomac St., Hagerstown, Maryland 21740.

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property APPROX. 100 x 140 feet

Quadrangle name Wichita East

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

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6	4	6	6	5	0
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4	1	7	2	2	6	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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Verbal boundary description and justification Lots 41, 43, 45, and 47 on Market Street in original Town of Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas as plotted by William Greiffenstein. These four lots are those upon which the hotel was constructed in 1918 and its subsequent addition in 1922

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard J. Cawthon, Architectural Historian

organization Historic Preservation Department
Kansas State Historical Society

date August 21, 1984

street & number 120 West Tenth

telephone (913) 296-3251

city or town Topeka

state Kansas 66612

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

Executive Director
title Kansas State Historical Society

date August 21, 1984

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

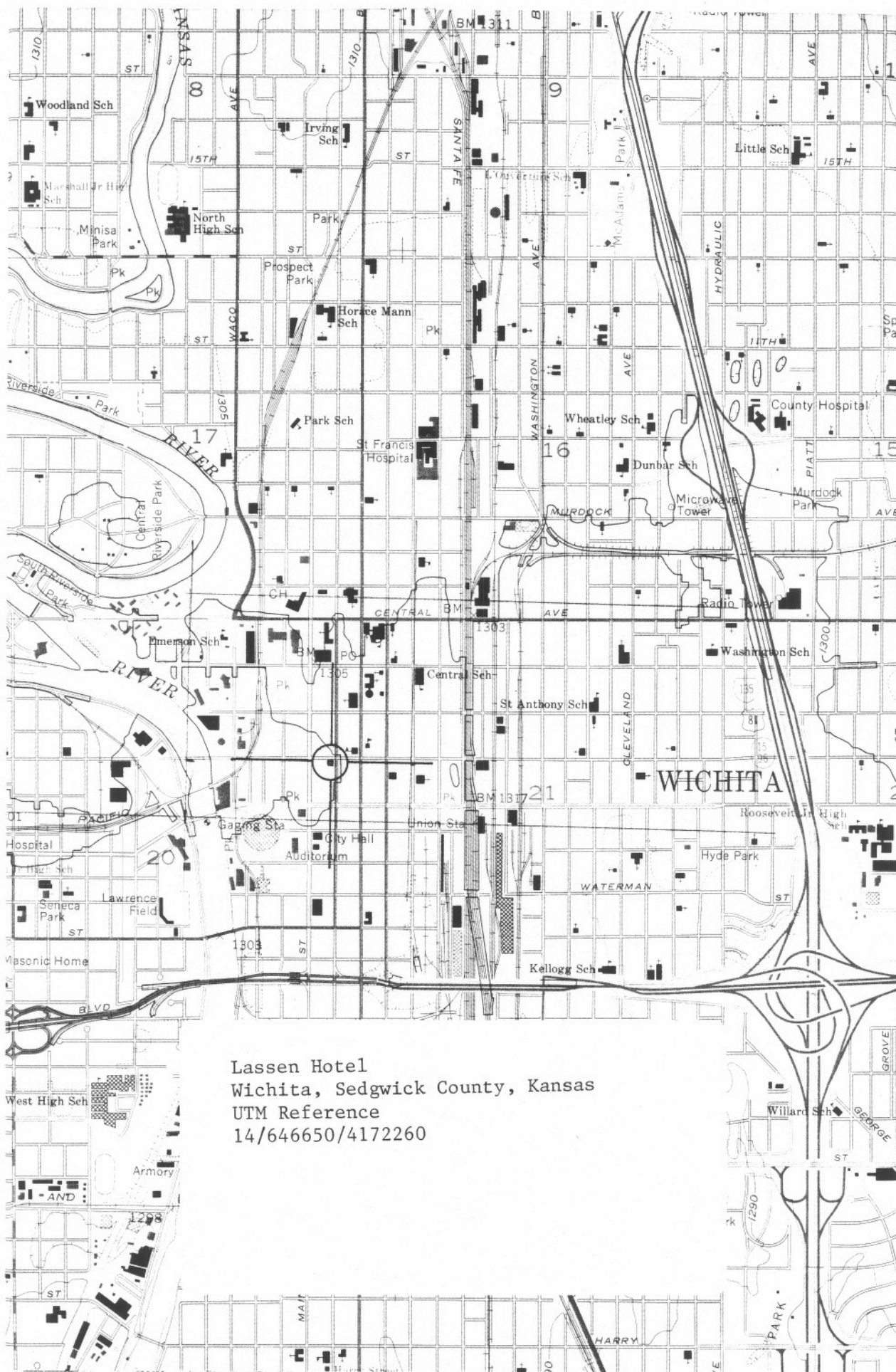
date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



Lassen Hotel
Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas
UTM Reference
14/646650/4172260

NSAS

WICHITA EAST QUADRANGLE
KANSAS—SEDGWICK CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

6550 1 SW
(GREENWICH)

